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ABSTRACT

The paper discusses the functions and activities of the World Council of Churches (WCC), particularly in connection with combating racism and poverty. The hypothesis is that policy makers interpret religious organizations such as the WCC as models of international communications in microcosm. Specific model functions of the WCC are identified. These include creating and reinforcing humanitarian goals, developing techniques to combat racism and poverty, providing aid to victims of racism or poverty, and lobbying with governments and international organizations concerning policy in these two areas. The author discusses the organization and varied activities of the WCC and presents two case studies: one detailing the history, activities, policies, and results of the fight against racism, particularly in Southern Africa: and the other describing various activities and programs dealing with aspects of economic development and poverty. Conclusions show that the WCC does have a place in the international decision-making process and in transnational activity, and that independent variables have a bearing on the realization of their goals. The strength of the WCC lies in speaking for the have-nots in society whether they are Christian or not. (CK)

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THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES:

HIDDEN HANDS CONTRIBUTING TO WELFARE AMONG NATIONS

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Guiding hands are sometimes also hidden; if they are not actively hidden they are often hidden simply because no one knows about them. And thus there are unintentionally hidden hands guiding the welfare among nations; among such hands are those of the World Council of Churches (WCC). The WCC would like its efforts to be better known and among its own closest constituents it conducts a publicity campaign meant to attract support, but to the world at large, these hands remain essentially hidden save for an occasional headline screaming that the churches are giving aid to terrorists.

The guiding hands of the WCC, contributing to welfare among nations, have been active in many fields. Post-war reconstruction and refugee settlement coupled with a desire and strategy for world stability and peace occupied the last half of the 'forties. Refugee displacement continued thorughout the following decades and their care and resettlement has been a major concern of the ecumenical movement. Disarmament and world order have been continuing areas of effort. Attaining social and economic equality for all men has been a major WCC activity. As third world membership increased, more and more WCC effort was devoted to combating international racism and encouraging and participating in economic development. It is these latter two topics with which this paper will deal.

These guiding hands are occupied by four basic functions: norm creation and reinforcement, developing techniques to combat racism or to develop more efficiently, funding victims of racism as well as development

projects, and advocacy with governments and international organizations concerning appropriate policies in these two areas. The WCC carries out these functions through statements, reports, studies, colloquia, consultations, and elite interactions. Authoritativeness is added to it through the attention paid to its activities by elite newspapers throughout the world.

Organization

Inasmuch as one of the WCC's functions as a guiding hand lies in norm-creation, we should take a look at certain aspects of WCC organization to understand better the various groups to whom the norms were addressed. It is difficult to pinpoint the reason for the acceptance by various secular bodies of WCC statements and the norms which they embody. This writer's hypothesis is that the various elites of society (given a plural-elite model) automatically consider the views of other elites and recognize an especial legitimacy of each elite in areas of assumed expertise. E.g., nuclear physicists should have valid opinions on the dangers of fallout, economists on economic nostrums and religious groups in matters of morals. One point of dispute has been the extent to which morals invades other realms of expertise.[1] But nevertheless, I hypothesize, religion is assumed to be an established social order with a legitimate function within society, even an accelleratingly secular society.

Its norm creation function is aimed at several constituencies. The most obvious would be a Christian constituency, first its own member churches

which it addresses for action, and secondly all Christians when it wishes to affect attitudes. Because it feels its moral claims universal, the WCC often broadens its constituency to "all men of goodwill" as an aspect of attitude formation or norm creation. In this case its broader constituency is not based on religious affiliation but more broadly on the established role of religion in society. Not content to address the man in the street and the man in the pew, the WCC often speaks directly to international officials in its statements and reports as it seeks to implant moral concepts in concrete situations. When the issue warrants it, it addresses national delegations to IGO meetings to gain support for particular issues before the meeting (e.g. UNCTAD) where norms need reinforcement or creation at that level (e.g., human rights). It has urged its views also on national governments; however, it has not wished to endanger the religious freedom of minority churches, so it will do so only with local church approval. More often it speaks to national governments through its member churches.

The organ in which all authority is vested in the WCC is the Assembly.[2] All member churches have representation in the septennial Assemblies, even if the more minuscule members are lumped together for purposes of representation. Because of the length of time between Assemblies, each take on an added importance in preparation and followup among the Christian constituency of the WCC. Thus the statements and reports which emanate from the Assembly are studied down to the parish level of the member churches. Prior to the Assembly, the issues to be considered are also discussed at all levels. The world political elite pay attention to these Assemblies, primarily in predominantly Christian countries, but in other countries attention may be

generated by the proximity of such a great gathering. When the Third Assembly was held in New Delhi in 1961, for example, Prime Minister Nehru had been invited to speak to it. Not too keen on enhancing the prestige of a "foreign" religious organization, he declined, until the attention attracted by this Assembly in India made it politically necessary for him to do so.

The Central Committee is elected by the Assembly to see that the broad outlines of policy decided by the Assembly are carried out until the next Assembly and to create policy when necessary. Since the Central Committee meets annually, it often has more topical statements to make on world affairs. Depending on the issue, it addresses itself to Christians, member churches, individual governments, governments collectively, international organizations or whoever stands in need of admonishment or encouragement. The Moderator of the Central Committee is always a prominent churchman in his own country and in ecumenical circles. He may make a statement on his own authority. When Bishop G.K.A. Bell of the UK was Moderator, he initiated the practice most suited to Englishmen, of writing a letter to The Times on his own authority and in his own name only. Even though such public statements are not made in the name of the organization, the prestige of the office adds to their authority.

The Executive Committee meets at least twice a year and should the occasion demand it when the Central Committee is not sitting, it may issue a statement. In addition the General Secretary on his own authority may speak out; a statement by both the General Secretary and the Moderator will have still more authority behind it. There are five Presidents of WCC elected by the Assembly. They have in the past sometimes spoken out

in varying numbers, but their role in norm formulation has not been an active one. Any unit of the WCC may make statements in areas of its own competence. When these statements are reported in both the religious and the secular press they will have their largest impact.

The WCC's members are diverse. It is amazing that they can speak out as often as they do with so little disagreement. This often means that the stand taken is the lowest common denominator. Nevertheless there has been visible a divergence of opinion particularly on matters affecting Third World Countries. This is sometimes most visible in the statements of regional church conferences or councils. The All Africa Conference of Churches had more definite ideas about an anti-racism programme than the WCC itself; the Christian Conference of Asia had more clear-cut statements on the control of private capital in development than did the WCC itself. In addition to the regional councils of churches there are also national councils of churches; these are not members of the WCC but are national collectivities of its members. Both regional and national councils have been given a special relationship with the WCC in its latest constitution.[3] They may be invited to attend Assemblies or Central Committee meetings with non-voting participation. They provide a primary conduit for transnational actions.

The man in the pew is probably content to read what his leaders think are the moral aspects of issues. For the government official or the international civil servant, this may be less enlightening than why a particular point is moral or immoral. This is particularly true if the leaders are Christian or at least accept the societal role of religion. In addition

the expertise contained in some reports is of use to the decision makers. The moralists have to be able to defend technically what opponents might say was impossible on technical grounds. While rhetorically statements might contain the disclaimer, "Experts must debate techniques(of disarmament), but the churches should constantly stimulate governments to make real advances,"[4] the churchmen really felt they knew what they were talking about. Some, such as Dr. Richard Fagley, became recognized experts in a particular area, in his case family planning programs (or as the euphemism was, responsible parenthood). He was consulted by delegations to the UN (he was in the New York Office, of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA) with Dr. Nolde) both on technical problems and on strategic approaches within that body.[5] Of course by 'churchmen' is meant layment as well as clergy, and there are eminent experts in any number of fields upon whom the clergy may call. The CCIA is the main organ dealing with inter-governmental organizations (IGO) for the WCC.

Norm-creation overlaps with lobbying activities. The statements and reports often provided the excuse for a meeting with national and international decision makers. The Archbishop of Canterbury after attending a meeting of the Central Committee in New Haven, Conn. in 1957 was received by the Secretary General of the UN to whom he presented the latest WCC statement on disarmament.[6] At the national level the approaching was usually done by national church officials. In the U.S. John Foster Dulles, who was instrumental in founding the CCIA and an active layman in WCC activities, was approachable by National Council of Churches officials. In some cases, the WCC officials were received by governmental leaders. In discussing, considering and investigating apartheid in South Africa, the

General Secretary Willem A. Visser't Hooft was received by South African governmental leaders as were several of his emissaries until 1974 when Dr. Connie Mulder, South African Information Minister, announced that as long as the WCC supported 'terrorist activity', all its leading members would be banned from entering South Africa.[7]

The consultations held on specialized subjects such as disarmament and economic development were also a type of lobbying. Governmental experts were invited and were thus exposed to the ideas and influence of the Christian churches. Three Consultations on Peace and Disarmament were held in Geneva to which the U.S., U.K., and USSR as well as some of the minor powers sent their ambassadors. Disarmament is so closely tied in with national interest ("vital" national interest) that no visible influence of these consultations can be seen. Nevertheless the heads of delegations themselves felt it important enough to attend rather than sending a minor official. The Consultation on Economic development held at Montraux in 1970 was attended by United Nations officials and governmental advisers and civil servants from the main aid-giving states.[8]

Much lobbying--perhaps the most effective--was done in the day-to-day contact with international officials or at least regular intermittent contact. With Drs. Nolde and Fagley in the New York Office, regular interchange took place with UN officials and delegates. WCC officials visited Rome regularly for the FAO annual meeting. Cooperation was also extended on a literacy program with UNESCO and a healthy family planning program with WHO. Lobbying is a two way street as we are aware from domestic lobbying groups. So reciprocal influence and use was visible in participation in IGO programs.

In addition to guiding its constituents and lobbying for its goals, the WCC put its money where its mouth was and participated in action programs to alleviate poverty and racism. Wishing to lead both donor and recipient governments in being more daring and imaginative in their aid programs, the WCC developed an aid program of its own; it has always had recipient governmental approval, but its programs are aimed directly at the local level and conducted there. It began a program to combat racism that brought it charges of helping assassins. It tried to bring pressure to bear on multinational corporations and banks aiding and investing in South Africa by selling its shares and withdrawing its monies. By actions as well as statements, the WCC has tried to guide nations towards new norms, creating better conditions for all.

Program To Combat Racism

When the First Assembly of the World Council met in Amsterdam in 1948 to formally create the organization, the question of race was on its agenda. It considered the issue in several sections, and condemnations of racism appeared in the reports,[9] where reports were addressed primarily to the churches, urging them to remove this scandal from their own lives. Basically, however, it was not an issue which excited passionate speeches or emotional debates, and Dr. W. A. Visser't Hooft in his post-Assembly report commented on the lack of emphasis on this problem at Amsterdam.

The year 1948 saw not only the founding of the World Council but the election of the National Party in South Africa on a platform of apartheid, a then ill-defined doctrine of racial segregation. The international questions which this raised were discussed in the early CCIA Executive

Committee and World Council Central Committee meetings. It is trite to say, but nonetheless true, that churchmen are children of their times and are no wiser than their contemporaries. The divisions within the World Council bodies on any topic were similar to those found in the secular world. So it was in regard to racism; some wanted immediate action against this evil, while others counseled restraint so as not to alienate the South African Christians.

The subconscious racial attitudes of white Europeans and Americans towards the prompt eradication of racism is illustrated by the debate within the Central Committee where those urging action were primarily non-white, led by M. M. Thomas of India, and those urging caution were primarily white, led by Dr. Visser't Hooft.[10] The caution led to nought. In spite of every conciliatory gesture possible, the Dutch Reformed churches of South Africa officially held to their doctrine of racial superiority, though there were, and are, voices within these churches which disagree with the official policy. The World Council maintained a dialogue with the Reformed churches in which it hoped to convince them of the error of their ways. The CCIA with its prepresentation at the United Nations did not actively support anti-apartheid resolutions for fear of jeopardising the uneasy relationship.

By the Second Assembly, held at Evanston, Illinois, U.S.A. in 1954, reaction against racism throughout the world was becoming more pronounced and attracted the attention of the delegates. The racial issue was considered thoroughly, racism eo ipso was condemned, and the establishment of a World Council department on racism was authorized.[11] It is unfortunate that this resolution was not put into effect for several years; the urgency

of the problem of international racism was not yet realized by white liberals.

The Sharpeville massacre of 1960 brought the English-speaking South African churches into conflict with the Dutch Reformed churches, and the World Council took the opportunity (upon invitation of the churches) of sending a fact-finding team headed by Dr. Robert S. Bilheimer. This visit resulted in the Cottesloe Consultation in that country the following December with interracial delegations from the Protestant churches in South Africa and officials from the World Council. A majority of the delegates there felt that apartheid was not consistent with the Christian gospel; this finding was not acceptable to two of the Dutch Reformed churches, both of which subsequently withdrew from the World Council. The Consultation did act as a catalyst in public discussion in South Africa; Die Burger, the influential Afrikaner newspaper, on the basis of the Cottesloe Statement, editorially urged the ending of the no-compromise stand on apartheid by the Verwoerd government.[12]

The holding of the Third Assembly in a non-white land, in New Delhi in 1961, insured greater Third World participation. Not unnaturally a great deal of attention was devoted to considering the racial issue. In spite of urging the churches to strive for racial justice by all means short of violence, no program was offered to guide the churches and the World Council in so doing.[13] In spite of all good wishes and good resolution, racial conditions did not better themselves; indeed, repression grew in Southern Africa as the Central African Federation broke up and Rhodesia prepared for a unilateral declaration of independence.

By the time the Fourth Assembly convened in Uppsala, Sweden, in 1968, race had become a burning issue throughout the world. In the United States the Civil Rights movement had heightened the consciousness of white and black alike. The independence of nearly all of Africa north of the Zambesi increased the membership of race-conscious churches in the World Council as it did of race-conscious states in the United Nations. Race, thereby, not only continued to be of concern to the World Council but became an issue of major proportions at Uppsala, made all the more poignant by the absence of a principal speaker, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who had fallen victim to the assassin's bullet two months prior to the Assembly. In addition to committee work, a special plenary session was devoted to a discussion of "White Racism or World Community?" in which the American black author Mr. James Baldwin, made world headlines with his accusations of Christian betrayal of black peoples. Lord Caradon addressed the same audience with words of warning and words of hope: "Coupled as it is with the world problems of poverty and population and youth race is the most explosive and most dangerous issue which the world must face....In such an international campaign we have a right to look for courageous leadership to the World Council of Churches."[14]

Race was discussed at length in the reports of three sections. The Assembly as a whole was ready to adopt a statement on racism, but objection was made by Dr. D.T. Niles of Ceylon that the statement was too general. On his motion, the issue was remanded to the 1969 Central Committee meeting.

In accordance with the recommendation of the Committee on Church and Society of the Uppsala Assembly that the World Council undertake a crash program to guide the churches and the Council in combatting racism, the Department on Church and Society convened the International Consultation on Racism at Notting Hill, London, on 19 May 1969, chaired by United States Senator George McGovern, a prominent Methodist layman. This Consultation suffered some disorderly disruptions from black militant groups demanding the churches pay reparations, but nevertheless managed to produce recommendations for a more detailed program to fight racism than theretofore. A little too active for the ecumenical "curia", the Ecumenical Program to Combat Racism presented to the Central Committee meeting at Canterbury in 1969 was greatly modified from that proposed at Notting Hill, although it still proved too strong for some of the white ecclesiastics.

The five-year anti-racism program as finally adopted by the Central Committee focussed on white racism as the most dangerous form of racism, based as it was on the overwhelming economic, political and military might of white states. The program consisted of the investigation of specific and selected racial programmes, consultations on problems common to all areas of racism, studies on possible means for achieving racial justice, strategies for churches to eliminate racism

within their own countries, and the creation of an International Advisory Committee (on racism.) from among members of the Central Committee.[15] The commitment became more than purely pro forma when a $150,000 budget was requested and a special fund created with $200,000 from World Council reserves and $500,000 from a special appeal. The special fund would dispense grants to organizations of oppressed racial groups for support of victims of racism, upon advice of the International Advisory and Executive Committees. Dr. E.A. Payne of Great Britain, supported by Dr. Robert J. Marshall of the United States and Dr. Adolf Wischmann of Germany, attempted to delete the latter provision, but the proposal was overwhelmingly defeated 62 to 7 with 11 abstentions. The World Council of Churches realised a whole-hearted commitment to the cause of human equality.

To General Secretary Blake and other Council functionaries, the simple press release of 3 September 1970, seemed merely the culmination of their rather extended labours in developing an anti-racism program. The members of the "curia" were shocked when they realised that they had themselves dumbfounded the world, or more accurately the white elite of the industrialised North, with the announcement of the disbursement of $200,000 to nineteen organizations combatting racism throughout the world.

This furor was caused by more of a public relations faux pas than any change of commitment or direction on the part of the World Council. Several ecumenists felt that the General Secretary should have better prepared the public for this announcement, or at least have elaborated on the grants and their purposes simultaneously with the press release. One British member of the Central Committee

expressed the view to the meeting of January 1971, that he himself had been "taken aback" by the off-hand nature of the announcement.[16] For the careful, or even careless, reader the press release clearly stated the authority for the grants and their objectives, namely to raise the level of awareness in the world to the existence of suffering of racially oppressed people and to strengthen the organization of groups combatting racism.

The grants were intended to support activist groups rather than welfare organizations; the latter simply alleviate symptoms (e.g. the hunger of a family whose breadwinner has been arrested or executed), while the former prepare society for change through their programs of propaganda and education. Some groups had engaged in constitutional activites for change, e.g. voter registration drives, while similar groups had found that such "legal" activities led to jail in South Africa, Rhodesia and the Portuguese colonies. Therefore, many had already progressed to subversive activities, some even to the point of taking up arms. In the abstract there could be no Christian objection to consciousness-raising, i.e. making known in the countries which practised discrimination and throughout the world the conditions which racism fostered. In the concrete, rage and fear in the white establishment was the reaction to the priority given Southern Africa: a total of $120,000 went to militant organizations called "liberation movements" or "guerrilla terrorists"-depending on the political orientation of the speaker.

These grants were <u>not</u> given to carry on war; they were given expressly for humanitarian and educational purposes to groups

responsible for large numbers of people. The People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola in Exile (GRAE) and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), as well as the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO) and the African Independence Party of Guinea and the Cape Verde Islands (PAIGC), all claimed to control territory on which they carried out educational and health programs among their peoples. There is good evidence that they did so. These organizations as well as the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) and the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), both of Rhodesia and the African National Congress and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), both of South Africa, and the South West African People's Organization (SWAPO) try to support refugees from among their peoples who had fled to neighbouring states. The educational, medical and humanitarian demands are far greater than the resources of these organizations can meet.

The public debate following the announcement of the grants was carried on entirely within the frame of reference enunciated by the white minority regimes rather than in the terms of the donors of the grants. The churches gave humanitarian aid to victims of racism who needed various types of physical help; South African Prime Minister Vorster accused the churches of "subsidising murder in the name of God".[17] Indeed, the New York Times wrote that Mr. Vorster's verbal outbursts were part of a political offensive brought about by his own domestic problems, primarily a labour shortage and the inability to achieve genuine economic progress along racially separate lines.[18] This postulate is supported by Mr. Vorster's rather restrained

initial reaction which was to describe the grants as "to put it mildly, shocking",[19] followed by a continual escalation to the most outrageous degree. The pronounced disarray among European and American church leaders, as well as the political and economic elites reflected in leading newspaper, was no doubt an encouragement for him to do so.

Among the elite newspapers, The Times, The Daily Telegraph, and the Sunday Times vociferously opposed the grants, while The Guardian, Die Zeit and the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung wholly or partially supported them. The attacks as well as the defences, as reflected in the news reports, emanaged from a preconceived white image of violence and justice. The Europeans perceived the African liberation groups as European armies, the military arm of the state, rather than as "governments" responsible for all the well-being of their peoples. They perceived budgets in terms of ability to shift from the educational sector to the military sector when outside gifts freed "obligated" funds, instead of recognizing the existence of empty coffers requiring education, medicines and other "luxuries" to be simply foregone if funds are not available from outside sources. What is most amazing from the whole outburst is that the following September 1971, a further $200,000 was distributed to twenty-four organizations, and almost no comment appeared in the world press nor denunciations from the white ruling elites. In this distribution nine groups active in Southern Africa received a total of $130,000.[20] In January 1973, a third allocation of $200,000 was made to twenty-five groups of which $101,000 was directed to Southern Africa. Because of a Dutch government gift of $179,000 in 1974, the PCR was able to make grants totalling $450,000, of which $322,000 went

to eleven Southern African groups. That same year saw the revolution in Portugal and the attainment of independence that year and the next by Mozambique and Angola. By the terms of the special grants, liberation groups which became governments were no longer eligible for aid from the PCR.

In 1975 donations from the governments of Norway, Sweden and the Netherlands allowed the PCR to grant $479,000 of which $257,000 went to four groups in Zimbabwe, Namibia, and South Africa. The following year grants reached $560,000 with five groups in those same countries receiving $275,000.[21] In the summer of 1977, the PCR distributed $530,000 around the world with $265,000 given to groups in Southern Africa. A grant of $85,000 was designated for the "Zimbabwe liberation struggle" with no specified recipient. Before awarding this grant to possible claimants, Dr. Philip Potter, the WCC's third general secretary, visited Tanzania, Zambia, and Mozambique to talk to the heads of those states as well as to Zimbabwean leaders in exile. After careful consideration, Dr. Potter and three WCC officers chose the Patriotic Front, headed by Robert Mugabe (a Roman Catholic and Marxist) and Joshua Nkomo, to receive this grant. The decision struck the white industrialized world like a bombshell. The controversy following upon the announcement of the grant completely overshadowed the $434,000 awarded in 1978. Of this only $180,000 was designated for groups in South Africa and Namibia and none to Zimbabwean groups. In 1979 $349,000 was granted with $40,000 for groups in Southern Africa.

The grant to the Patriotic Front focused a great deal of the diffused discontent from the white world with the PCR. The Salvation Army, the

Presbyterian Church of Ireland, and the Evangelical Church of Schaumburg-Lippe suspended their memberships in the WCC. Other European churches called into question in varying degrees of vociferousness the wisdom and morality of the decision. One of the largest supporters of the WCC, the Evangelical Church of Germany, considered seriously breaking its ties in December 1979.

World Council publications have gone to the extent of defending the Patriotic Front from the calumny of atrocities. The killing of missionaries has been heralded in the world press as being the work of Patriotic Front guerrillas. The WCC has voiced doubt that this was, in fact, the case. In its official publication, One World, it has repeated allegations made elsewhere that members of the Selous Scout unit of the Rhodesian Army have masqueraded as guerrillas and have committed the publicized atrocities against missionaries as well as against villagers whom they suspected of complicity. It cites as supporting evidence a report, entitled The Propaganda War, published by the London-based Catholic Institute for International Relations. The United States Conference for the WCC reported the doubts of the American ambassador to the United Nations, Andrew Young, as evidence, noting as well that British Foreign Secretary David Owen had expressed similar doubts about blaming freedom fighters for the killing of missionaries. Even the Christian Science Monitor of 11 July 1978, in an article called 'Who Kills Missionaries in Rhodesia?', raised further doubts by offering evidence that such atrocities were not perpetrated by Zimbabwean guerrillas.

The Zimbabwean case represents a new phase in the WCC's Programme to Combat Racism. Previously disapproval of racist regimes was shown in

generalities based on racism being contrary to the gospel of Christ. Now it is making a political choice from among various political solutions. Ecumenical organizations seem most effective when they speak in specifics rather than generalities.[22] The WCC's new phase may bring new successes. However, it is also a truism of international politics that the greater the perceived national interest, the less effective is advice and action against that interest.

Investment and Disinvestment

For the many who felt that even humanitarian aid was indirect approval of violence, alternative strategies were introduced to enable them to fight racism with a clear conscience. Multiple strategies were evolved to hit racism in Southern Africa from all sides. The grants were worldwide in scope; these other strategies were aimed exclusively at the minority-regimes of Southern Africa. In 1972, it was not grants to guerrillas which caught the headlines but the WCC activities that were devoted to the withdrawal of investments 'from institutions which perpetuate racism.'

The PCR presented to the Central Committee in 1972 a loaded report on investment in Southern Africa and the action which the WCC should take concerning it.[23] It offered three possibilities: increased investment with resultant prosperity eroding apartheid; reform through attendance at stockholders' meetings; and withdrawal of all foreign investment from that area of the world. It concluded, based on cost-of-living statistics, that the economic results of the trickle-down effect were inadequate and did nothing to erode apartheid. As a result of much stockholder action in the United States, the Polaroid Corporation attempted to raise the economic and social status of blacks within its South African subsidiary; the PCR adjudged from

this sole example (which some regarded as hopeful) that stockholder pressure was inadequate to dent apartheid, generalizing from this to all foreign corporations in South Africa. The resultant recommendation was total withdrawal of foreign investments from Southern Africa in order to cause the collapse of the white regimes. The first step in this campaign for total withdrawal was the sale of all WCC investments and of all member churches' investments in corporations doing business in Southern Africa.

There are really two issues here which the PCR did not clearly delineate. The first is the moral argument of whether churches should benefit economically from the oppression of others. Throughout the capitalist period of church endowment investments, there has been this view regarding certain industries. For example, churches at one time did not invest in armaments industries. In this day and age, it is questionable how many could have such purified portfolios. Another more recent example is the American Methodist Church's sale of its Coca-Cola shares because that company had bought wineries. Such actions are more of a witness to what a particular church feels it stands for than an attempt to produce economic injury. Individual churches and the World Council of Churches may indeed feel it immoral to benefit from the extremely low wages paid blacks under the apartheid system and may wish to withdraw their money from those firms. The PCR did not so frame the question however; it framed it as an attempt at economic injury to firms which resisted its admonitions.

The other issue is the actual withdrawal by foreign firms of their investments in Southern Africa. After the independence of Portuguese Africa, these tactics were directed primarily at South Africa, though Rhodesia was also a target. An important question here is whether the goal is achievable, even given the co-operation of foreign firms investing there, and whether its

effect would be the desired one. In previous writings, I have argued that ecumenical activities achieve a practical goal (such as the protection of child labour) more often than an impossibly broad goal (such as general disarmament).[24] Have PCR officials considered the practicality of this goal? What would happen to this investment, mostly in immovable property, should General Motors follow PCR advice and leave South Africa? Would it get a reasonable price for its factories? Or, in this act of economic warfare, would the South African government simply feel it had nothing to lose by nationalizing the industry? The PCR has not indicated whether it means its exhortations to be a witness or if it feels it is offering a practical possibility.

The PCR has ignored the fact that much public information provided by American firms doing business in South Africa resulted from ecclesiastical stockholders' questions. It is much more difficult to ignore a bishop representing his church's holdings than it is a radical gadfly. It is indeed true, as the PCR holds, that the resulting amelioration in black workers' conditions has been inadequate; nevertheless, the information achieved has served as ammunition for ever more strenuous anti-apartheid campaigns. To my mind, the complete withdrawal of foreign investment in South Africa is an unrealistic goal; it will not be achieved by the churches; it has not been achieved by stronger, secular institutions, such as labour unions. Yet, it may be that the WCC has to act as prophet pointing to the right way, even though the world will not follow.

Without resolving the above dilemmas, the Central Committee, in disagreement with its more business-minded finance committee, ordered the latter to sell all WCC holdings in companies 'directly involved in investment in or

trade with' Southern Africa. The finance committee advised the Central Committee that stockholder action would be a more effective course than the sale of the rather insignificant holdings of the WCC. In fact, it posited, firms might feel relieved that the WCC was no longer a shareholder. The Central Committee held to its original decision, however.[25] The actual sale, announced in January 1973, caused not a ripple in capitalist waters; nevertheless, the Central Committee later recommended similar action to its member churches and other Christian bodies.

Not all WCC members have followed the Central Committee's lead. The British Council of Churches did not agree that sale of shares and total withdrawal were the answer to racism. The German churches have fewer endowments, depending as they do on a 'church tax' administered by the government. Some German church leaders urged that no action be taken to sell shares or to urge withdrawal by German firms operating in South Africa. These leaders urged that the German churches work through the firms to better working conditions there. The EKD dissociated itself from the WCC publication listing the firms (of which there were 127 German ones) whose stocks the WCC recommended selling.[26] The EKD representatives reported regularly that talks with German firms were making progress.

The publicity attendant upon the sale of WCC stock did result in third-party actions. The Guardian published an article on the low wages paid by British firms in South Africa,[27] soon thereafter the British government published guidelines for British firms there. A British House of Commons subcommittee proposed an investigation into the matter. Many firms said they had not known what wages their subsidiaries had been paying. Many ordered

the wages raised after the attendant publicity showing that the wages were below the Poverty Datum Line, an amount calculated by South African researchers as the absolute minimum necessary for subsistence. The South African Council (SACC) also made enquiries into the pay policies of firms in South Africa. Some 150 corporations agreed to contribute to black-initiated projects for economic development. The SACC recognized, however, the danger of 'conscience-money' being paid and unjust employment practices continuing. The United Kingdom-South Africa Trade Association urged its members 'to pay at least subsistence wages to blacks employed by their South African subsidiaries.'[28]

WCC pressure and WCC publicity cause its members and sympathetic groups to bring pressure against their own governments and firms and thus indirectly against the South African government. One observer of the South African scene, Dr. Merle Lipton, sees the existence of 'authoritarian reform,' that is, government-inspired change resulting from outside pressure constantly applied.[29] The changes in petty apartheid and working conditions are changes for the better, but they do not by any means do anything to change the structure of injustice.

Bank Loans For Apartheid

Investment and capital are provided not only by multinational corporations but also by banks. The 1972 Central Committee meeting, besides ordering disinvestment, also ordered the WCC to 'deposit none of its funds in banks which maintain banking operations' in Southern Africa. The executors of WCC policy were not quite sure what such a policy meant. This was at first interpreted to mean those banks which had branches in Southern Africa. Clearly an international organization such as the WCC, which moved money across continents, needed international banking facilities. Nevertheless the first step taken was to send a questionnaire to all banks with which the WCC did business, asking

if they had branches in the Republic of South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Angola, Mozambique, or Guinea-Bissau.[30] In addition, they asked other questions regarding loans to governments and to public and private corporations in those areas. All the banks except one replied; all stated that they had no branches but declined to answer the other questions which would breach the confidentiality of their relationship with their clients. This inconclusive exchange seemed to leave WCC officials nonplussed. If this was not the key, what was to be the next step?

The activities of the European-American Banking Corporation (EABC) attracted the attention of the PCR. The Corporate Information Center of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America (NCCUSA) had produced an exposé of EABC activities in The Frankfurt Documents: Secret Bank Loans to the South African Government. According to this document, EABC loans to the South African government and its public corporations provided about 20 percent of South Africa's foreign loans for the period 1970-3. These short-term loans were used to offset temporary trade deficits as well as for a strategic energy development program. The WCC sent letters to the EABC and to the six individual member banks citing what was known about EABC activities, relevant WCC resolutions, and the conviction of the WCC that the EABC and its members should cease such loans. If not, the WCC would ensure that none of its funds were deposited with any member bank. As the EABC noted in its reply, it felt 'faced with an ultimatum rather than a request for discussion and consideration.'[31]

The six banks and their creature, the EABC, felt strongly that the WCC was asking the impossible and was impertinent in doing so. The primary argument, aside from the usefulness of investment to provide higher standards of living for blacks, was that banking was a politically neutral function; banks had no

right to coerce conduct not related to their clients' banking practices. Where would such coercion appropriately end? In any case, the first duty of a bank is to protect the interest of its shareholders. In other words, business as usual.

The WCC executive committee, considering these replies, resolved at Nairobi to deposit no funds in EABC member-banks (which resulted in the closing of its account with only one of them, the Midland Bank of the United Kingdom) and encouraged other Christian groups to continue pressure on these banks to cease loans to South Africa by means of publicity, stockholder action, and withdrawal of accounts. (All had stated that they had no loans with Rhodesia, and in the meantime Portuguese Africa had become independent.)

As a result of executive committee action, a philosophical correspondence began between the WCC and the Amsterdam-Rotterdam Bank (AMRO) on behalf of the EABC and its shareholders. While this dialogue was being conducted, an anti-apartheid group in the Netherlands, 'Prepaid Reply,' was strongly lobbying banks and politicians at the national level. Similar pressure was exerted against another Dutch bank used by the WCC, the Algemene Bank Nederland (ABN). Both AMRO and ABN, due to the persuasion of the anti-apartheid groups, the Netherlands Council of Churches, and some political parties, announced they would make no further loans to the South African government or its agencies. Interestingly enough, ABN noted in its reply that 'one of our considerations has been the growing criticism nationally and internationally, both within and outside ecclesiastical circles, of the situation in South Africa...Our decisions are not governed by the profit motive alone, but non-commercial considerations also play an important role in the process of making decisions.'[32]

This is truly a remarkable concession, considering the original position that banking is primarily non-judgmental and amoral in character.

The response of member churches on this issue was far from unanimous. The EKD refused even to start discussions with the Deutsche Bank, the German shareholder of the EABC. Rather than being uninterested in the whole question, the EKD seemed more eager to save German capitalism than to help Africans under apartheid. There was some activity by individual German churches and by the German Student Christian Movement in favour of the WCC position. An even stronger disagreement was voiced by Bishop Oscar Sakrausky of the Evangelical Church in Austria who wrote to the Austrian shareholder of the EABC. Creditanstalt-Bankverein, that he was in no way in agreement with the WCC position.[33]

The Canadian Taskforce on the Churches and Corporate Responsibility (a joint Protestant-Roman Catholic undertaking) has worked actively to fulfill the WCC mandate. It has had limited success with the Royal Bank of Canada which stated that under 'current circumstances it will not make general purpose or balance of payment loans and that it will not make loans if these are judged to support apartheid or South Africa's pass-law system.[34] It would not, however, make a clear commitment of no further loans at all to South Africa. The Bank of Montreal admitted that its loans to South Africa 'are insignificant in amount and effect on profitability,' but felt that giving in to church demands 'would not be morally defensible nor morally consistent.[35] No change was made in the positions of the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, the Toronto Dominion Bank, or the Bank of Nova Scotia. All major churches are not members of the taskforce, and all have not agreed on common action against recalcitrant banks at the national level. The taskforce met in the fall of 1977

with the Canadian Department of External Affairs which made changes in Canada's commercial policy towards South Africa, including the withdrawal of commercial counsellors and the cessation of export support for transactions relating to South Africa.

The Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility of the NCCCUSA in the late 'sixties launched a campaign against ten American banks which had loaned the South African government $40 million. Largely as a result of this campaign these loans were closed in November 1969. More recently it has been trying to persuade American churches to withdraw their funds from banks continuing to loan money to South Africa, Citibank, Chase Manhattan Bank, and First National Bank of Chicago have made limited undertakings regarding no further loans to South Africa;[36] this indicates some effectiveness of stockholder action. A British campaign against bank loans to South Africa, and especially against the Midland Bank as a shareholder in the EABC, was opened by End Loans to South Africa (ELTSA). This group organized shareholder action by various churches and other socially minded bodies holding shares in Midland Bank, and the campaign has been extended to other British banks. Midland Bank did announce in 1978 that, as a matter of policy, it was no longer making loans to South Africa.

In September 1976 the Dutch government decided to end export guarantees to South Africa for periods longer than one year, thus effectively eliminating capital export to that country. AMRO had used its participation in such government-guaranteed loans as proof of the legitimacy of its South African loans. The same year the Norwegian government also decided no longer to provide export guarantees to South Africa and stopped any transfer of capital

there. Although not directly attributable to the WCC campaign against loans, these policies were changed in countries where there was extensive public debate on the issue. In fact in this campaign to end bank loans to South Africa, the WCC seemed particularly effective. The limitation of its goal provided only that banks had to take a step or two in the WCC direction, not that all financial dealings in South Africa had to be severed. The WCC was willing to compromise; it accepted slightly ambiguous wording as face-saving devices for the banks on their assurances that they meant what the WCC wanted them to mean. Unfortunately this concrete, step-by-step approach which proved so effective seems to be in the process of abandonment by the Central Committee. At its 1979 meeting it called upon member churches to support mandatory economic sanctions against South Africa,[37] a broader, less definable, more elusive goal.

Nuclear Proliferation

The African National Congress of South Africa published in September 1975 documentation concerning nuclear collaboration between German firms and the South African government in the building of a nuclear enrichment plant. On the basis of this information, the All-Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) wrote the Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland asking them to exert pressure on the German government to cease this collaboration which would enable South Africa to threaten all of Africa with nuclear catastrophe. Bishop Class, chairman of the EKD council, after consultation with the German government and his council, replied abruptly that these allegations were not true and that the charges should not be repeated in the future. The African church leaders took this to mean German ecclesiastics had no desire to participate

in any dialogue. At the Nairobi assembly in December 1975, German church leaders met with their African counterparts and issued a temporizing communiqué that further investigations into the African National Congress charges would be made.[38]

The assembly itself took up the issue of nuclear collaboration with South Africa by Western powers in the then-pending negotiations to construct nuclear power plants in South Africa. The assembly named the companies in the consortia which were vying for this business; it pointed out that these plants would make South Africa more self-sufficient in energy production and therefore less susceptible to outside pressure. It was particularly concerned because South Africa had refused to become a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. The power plants and the enrichment plant would facilitate the development of nuclear weapons. Indeed in 1974, the vice-president of South Africa's Atomic Energy Board had stated that South Africa had the capability of developing an atomic bomb. The Nairobi assembly called upon its member churches in France, Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and the United States (as countries where the firms in the consortia had their headquarters) to make public to their constituents the political and military implications of nuclear collaboration with South Africa.[39]

To governments of depressed economies, exports to South Africa, whether nuclear or non-nuclear, meant jobs for their people. The Dutch government in 1975 had insisted on South African adherence to the Non-Proliferation Treaty as a condition for collaboration. However, some of the ministers had already given private assurances to Dutch firms about supplying non-nuclear material for the project in any event. In 1976 the Netherlands Council of

Churches (which includes the Roman Catholic church in that enlightened country) presented to the government a declaration against Dutch collaboration. Whether the churches, aided by anti-apartheid groups would have prevailed became moot when South Africa, because of the controversy withdrew its tentative acceptance of the offer from the American-Dutch-Swiss consortium and awarded it to the French one, Framatome.

The Council of the French Protestant Federation immediately protested this Franco-South African nuclear collaboration. Since contracts were signed within a day, preparations must have been long under way. Was the letter of intent to the Dutch consortium only a diversionary tactic? The Archbishop of Rheims, chairman of Justitia et Pax, joined with the French Protestants in a joint consultation with Dutch Catholics and Protestants which resulted in a joint declaration of 14 June 1976,[40] expressing solidarity with African peoples and regretting that economic interests had been preferred above human needs. But this was after the fact; the contracts had been signed.

The year 1976 witnessed further ecclesiastical junketing as African church leaders travelled to Germany for further consultations with EKD officials about nuclear collaboration. The AACC held that West Germany was at least partly responsible for South Africa's advanced nuclear development; the EKD maintained that the West German government was not directly involved. It further stated that its government's opinion was that any transfers of nuclear technology from Germany to South Africa had been for peaceful purposes. The German delegation held valiantly to its government's line, but conceded that it would recommend that the EKD council call upon the West German government to influence German corporations against further nuclear activity in South Africa.[41] In spite of the careful hedging of the German

churches, the European churches showed greater solidarity in opposing nuclear collaboration with South Africa than they did on the withdgawal of economic investment there. The potential for misuse of nuclear power for peaceful purposes was clearly understood by the churchmen; the misuse of General Motors or IBM was less obvious to some.

The nuclear issue may also point to the need for an ecclesiastical intelligence system. The main initiative had come from a publication of the African National Council (a group which had received PCR grants); it was this which caused debate in the WCC, in Germany, and in the Netherlands. The sudden switch from the American-Dutch-Swiss consortium to the French one, with immediate signing of contracts, indicates a great deal of activity behind closed doors. The French churches had not been prepared for this sudden switch. Though they acted with amazing alacrity, they could not undo decisions made surreptitiously. This specific, limited, achievable goal, the near-unanimity among the churches, and the small number of actors may augur well for a continuation of this campaign.

Guiding People Out of Poverty

The World Council of Churches has provided guidance through its hidden hands in attempting to erase the indignity of human poverty. It has done this 1) by carrying out emergency relief in the years immediately following World War II, 2) by providing its own economic aid on the realization in the early fifties that the "emergency" of hunger and poverty would be an on-going phenomenon in an uncertain world, 3) by trying to develop new concepts of aid, 4) by lobbying governments and inter-governmental organizations to give more aid through better conceived plans.

In order to obtain support for its own programs and for lobbying governments and IGOs, the WCC first had to create support among its own constituents. The WCC with its member churches studied the theological bases of Christian responsibility toward the physical well-being of those in the developing areas of the world, thereby providing a theological rationale for the Christians' humanistic actions. It thus created support for this program and formulated new norms of "helping thy neighbor" applicable to neighbors on the other side of the globe. It addressed these new norms simultaneously to the man in the pew and to governmental and IGO leaders. This transnational activity of reaching both the ordinary Christian and governments was conducted by the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA), Department (later Division and presently Commission) on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (DICARWS) and the WCC publicity department. While one arm was soothing the brow of the suffering, the other was formulating new norms and applying old norms of Christian charity to the present situation. The relief work was carried out by several religious organizations with some of the resources provided by denominational brethren but the greatest amount of goods and money was provided by the American government, all coordinated by DICARWS.

Since Moses brought down the tablets of stone with fully formulated norms, norm creation has progressed more slowly. This slow progression is fully visible in tracing the development of a particular norm through its consideration and elaboration by various WCC bodies. For example, the most important WCC voice, the Assembly, at its inaugural meeting in Amsterdam in 1948 only briefly mentioned the poverty of the Third World (then colonial world). Asian Christians, however, were more concerned with their own

poverty and its causes, and in 1949 at a regional Eastern Asia Christian Conference (later Christian Conference of Asia) meeting, they spoke out against the "abject poverty and oppressive systems that cramp ...personality."[42] In the churches, as among the states, the views on the issue of poverty and responsibility for it as on many other issues, were divided along the lines of the haves and the have-nots. The views of the have-not Christians would continually call for more radical actions and programs than would the views of the Christians from developed countries.

By 1950 the emergency of World War II was past, but the need and suffering of many continued. Inter-Church Aid programs were broadened to help poor Christians and Christian institutions throughout the world. The Second Assembly, meeting, surrounded by the plenty of the United States in 1954, recognized (as had the capitalist governments) that hunger and poverty were continuing emergencies. This Assembly declared that inter-church aid had become a permanent obligation of the WCC.[43] The 1955 Central Committee meeting broadened this concept by urging that projects supported by the WCC should be those of benefit to the whole community as well as to the Christians in it. Thus in less than a decade the norm of helping those less fortunate was translated from that of family, congregation, parish, denomination, European country to Christians in need throughout the world. Then this narrow confessional norm was broadened to include helping of all God's creatures without regard to their religion.

The increase in Third-World member churches caused a radicalization of the WCC view of development. This factor, added to the general tumult of the late sixties, brought a radical view to the fore at the 1968 Uppsala Assembly. Here the responsibility for the poverty of the underdeveloped world was placed

directly on the shoulders of the wealthy. At the Fifth Assembly in Nairobi in 1975, support for the New International Economic Order was voiced, but basically here, as in the secular world, there was a consolidation and norm reinforcement rather than norm-creation.

Creating Norms through actions. The major role of the WCC has been one of coordination rather than actual executor of aid. DICARWS/CICARWS has acted as a clearing house for projects proposed by churches and church-related groups in developing countries. With the small amount of resources available some of these are evaluated by the WCC, but all are put on the project list and sent to the wealthy churches which choose one (or more) to s upport financially. A few very large projects, such as the rebuilding of an Iranian village destroyed in an earthquake in 1962, are undertaken directly by CICARWS. CICARWS is trying to widen its network of aid givers by contacting religiously oriented groups not yet participating in development through the WCC. Presently CICARWS has a list of some 800 projects a year channelling some $20 million. CICARWS also coordinates the churches' response to emergencies, such as earthquakes, typhoons, drought, etc. It also is charged with coordinating the ecumenical refugee programs in conjunction with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and interested countries.

In keeping with the urgency of the times, the Uppsala Assembly wished to hasten development by committing more of the churches' resources and making citizens of the industrial states more acutely aware of the urgency. It carried out the former by proposing a 2% self-taxation on church income and the latter by creating the Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development (CCPD). It had as its functions 1) administering the

Ecumenical Development Fund (EDF) created for the 2% tax, 2) providing technical evaluations of innovative development projects funded by the Ecumenical Development Fund, 3) creating studies and publications on development topics for the developers, and 4) providing development education to industrialized states.[44]

CCPD development education deals with norm reinforcement of wealthy states' duty to aid poorer states in their development. The means used have included an international workshop in Europe and "Development Week" promotions in various developed countries conducted by the churches there.

CCPD studies and publications have included dossiers on consciousness raising, on people's movements for development, on the creating of new lifestyles to reduce consumption, on support for the New International Economic Order, on appropriate technology, on churches in rural development and many others. It is presently charged with working on studies on the "new economics" (economic "delinking" of economies of developed and developing states), the relationship between technology, unemployment and transnational capital, relationship between transnational agro-business and the food problem of the world.

The Technical Services Desk of CCPD provides evaluations for projects proposed for funding by the EDF. In addition, Technical Services in strongly supportive of the concept of "appropriate technology, technology which is appropriate to a particular economic stage and which is appropriable by people in that stage.

Reinforcing Capitalist Norms. One of the newest ecumenical methods of development was brought about due to circumstances which originally had little to do with development. The PCR had recommended withdrawal of funds

from companies doing business in South Africa and the question arose as to what kind of investment policies Christian institutions ought to follow. It was felt that some institutions should exist in which churches could invest and receive a modest return on their endowments and which would also help others to develop. CCPD was given the task of undertaking an inquiry into the feasibility of such a body. When the results of the study were debated at the 1973 Central Committee meeting, the Russian Orthodox delegates opposed the project as an extension of Western capitalism and colonialism.[45] Nevertheless, the report was approved, and a special committee was appointed to make detailed proposals. This resulted in November 1975 in the incorporation as a cooperative under Dutch law of the Ecumenical Development Cooperative Society (EDCS).

There is no doubt but that the Russians were right and that this organization perpetuates the norms of capitalism in areas otherwise innocent of them. Dr. Wijemanne, the Indonesian General Manager of EDCS, has written that all other ecumenical funds give grants, many of which have gone into building of infrastructure, but the EDCS provides a means for "a socially responsible use of capital". For the recipients of this capital, there is the challenge to use investment capital "in building up self-reliance, competence and productivity in needy communities" while offering them a means of livelihood.[46] A truly capitalistic ethic!

Membership in EDCS is institutional, i.e., limited to Christian churches or their agencies. A minimum of one share costing $250.00 provides membership. No matter how many shares a group holds, however, only one vote per shareholder is allowed. This rule was instituted to allow equality among creditors and debtors. But even the EDCS gives grants for Third World churches

desiring membership but without the funds, an EDCS share may be bought through a grant contributed by the German churches! There are now 130 members of whom 35% are from the Third World. Share capital is presently over three million dollars. Membership is not limited to Protestants and Orthodox, and the idea seems to have caught the imagination of several Roman Catholic orders in the U.S.A. and Rome which have bought $750,000 worth of shares.

The projects must meet certain criteria before loans are made. They are to benefit the neediest 40% in developing countries, and the projects should provide for their basic needs (as opposed to goods for profit or export). The recipients should be organized into cooperatives. The project has a reasonable potential to become self-sustaining and should contribute to the betterment not only of the recipients but of the larger community of which they are a part.

The first loan of $100,000 was to the Ecuadorian Fund for the Progress of People (initiated by the Roman Catholic Church in Ecuador) to provide low interest loans for farmers to buy seeds, land, etc. Another loan of $350,000 was to a Peruvian Cooperative of several thousand workers processing alpaca wool. From repayments for loans to such projects the EDCS hopes to pay its first dividends in 1980. In spite of its capitalist orientation, it cannot get entirely away from grants. Not only are there the above mentioned membership grants, but grants have been made to pay for its administrative expenses for some years to come. Grant money has already been provided for program developers in the field, one in Latin America and one in Africa; a third will be stationed in Asia when the financial support becomes available. So even if dividends are declared, the operation is not entirely self-supporting. It is no more shocking (and a lot less expensive) than help for Chrysler Corporation; perhaps Christian support for capitalism will temper capitalist

norms with Christian charity.

The capitalist ethic may be getting some reinforcement, but new norms are being subtly created or capitalist norms silently transformed. For example, the concept of socially responsible investment is being promoted for church bodies and conscientious Christians. Attempts are being made to supplant the capitalist norm of highest possible return (maximising profit with restraint of greed) in acceptance of a modest return. In days of double-digit inflation, it may be too much to ask that universities' and public bodies' pension funds have other considerations than maximising return but for more normal economic times, it is a concept to consider for those who advocate withdrawal of investment from firms doing business in Southern Africa or firms with unfair labor policies or other socially undesirable factors.

Summary. The World Council of Churches has provided guiding hands for the welfare of the poor of the world. Unlike bilateral aid between states, WCC aid is not self-seeking. It has been aimed at coreligionists for the most part but not exclusively. There are three project lists: that of CICARWS and the CCPD for grants and that of EDCS for loans. The connecting link in these is that they must help the poorest segment of society. They are local projects, seldom ostentatious and usually innovative ideas to be a beacon for others. This has been characteristic of the WCC projects from the beginning. For the last six years the World Bank has also been small-project oriented. Robert S. McNamara has called for small-scale, local projects to aid the poorest in the Third World.[47] The churches had hoped to be models for governmental development projects; perhaps they have become so.

A Communications Model

In ascertaining the effect the WCC has had in international affairs, one must keep in mind its possibilities. While some may consider it a divine institution, the age of miracles--or belief in miracles--is past. It is an organization in this world and it must react in this world. It is unscientific, not to say illogical, to expect this body to accomplish what leagues of states themselves have not been able to accomplish. Racism and injustice exist in spite of international governmental attempts to curb them and in spite of religious (World Council and Roman Catholic) activity against them. Poverty and hunger still exist.

At the beginning of this paper, I stated a hypothesis that elites of social institutions still recognize in this secular age the role of religious institutions. In support of this hypothesis one would have to use not a power model of international relations but a communications model. One could point to various aspects of power, e.g., financial strength (the budget of the WCC is more than that of many small states), ability to organize voters in pluralistic societies, but basically the power model does not provide as plausible an explanation as does a communications model.

Throughout this paper reference has been made to normative statements which have been communicated to international officials and governments as well as Christians. The reception by governmental and international officials of WCC leaders bearing these statements illustrates that at least they wish to give lip service to the institution represented. Ceremonial heads of state and heads of government have taken the time to attend WCC meetings or receive the leaders of those meetings. This includes Dutch and British royalty at meetings in those countries, A Vice-President and Premier of India

and the Chairman of the Presdium of the Hungarian People's Republic when the Central Committee met in that country in 1956 (prior to the uprising). Sir Akanu Ibiam of Nigeria, has been active in WCC affairs: President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia attended the Uppsala Assembly (1968); Prime Minister Michael Manley of Jamaica attended the Nairobi Assembly (1975). This is but a partial listing of the political elite receptive to WCC leaders and statements given to illustrate the interchange of communication at this level, an acceptance of the existence and work of the WCC. In addition governmental technical elites have also worked with various WCC bodies.

The interest of the "fourth estate" in the doings this ecclesiastical organization also illustrates the acceptance of its role as a social institution. Newspapers in predominantly Protestant societies, the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung the Neue Zürcher Zeitung, the Times of London, The Guardian, and to a lesser extent, the New York Times might be expected to carry some news of the WCC. Yet Le Monde in predominantly Catholic France and, wonder of wonders, (or shades of Marx) communist party newspapers both in the West (L 'Humanité and London's Daily Worker) and in the East, particularly Neues Deutschland in East Berlin, note WCC statements especially those concerning disarmament and racism. In spite of noting only those statements useful to communism, the act of citation was itself an acknowledgment of the legitimacy of this religious body.

A hypothetical illustration of the communications of this social institution with a political one, the United Nations, is shown in figure 1. In this chart the WCC is communicating to several levels at once. World Council information and judgment (output) concerning a particular issue, e.g., family planning, goes to its international constituency (input), to the

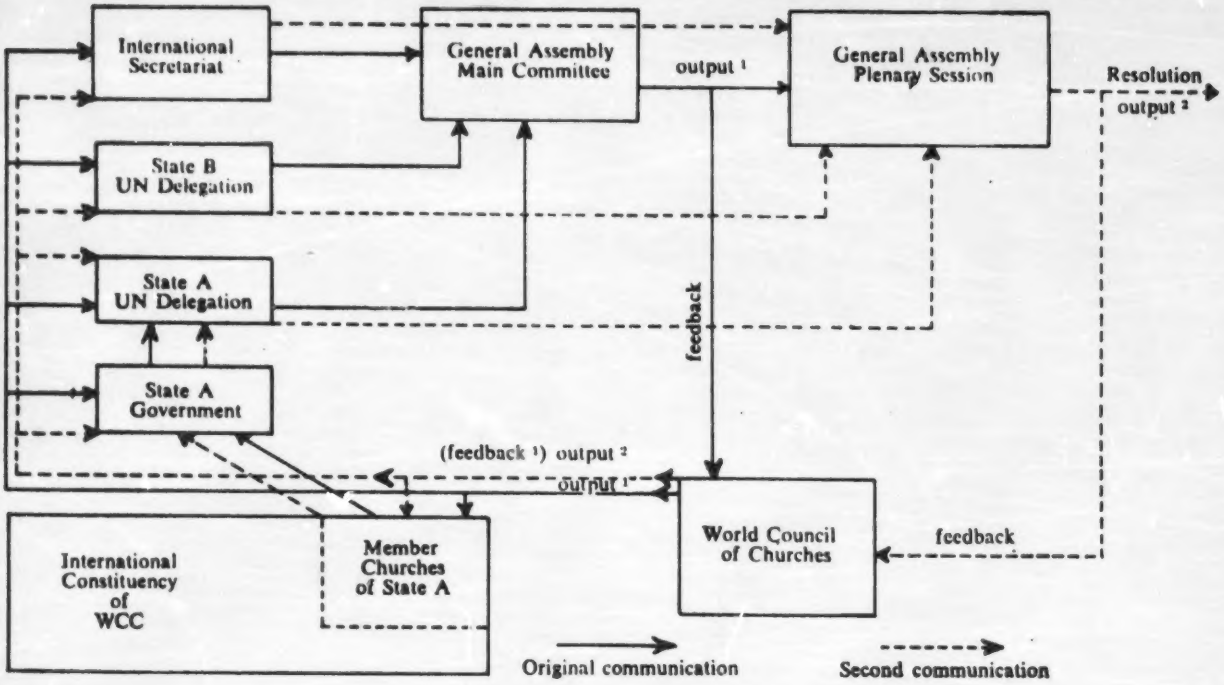
government of State A, to the United Nations delegations of States A & B, and to the UN Secretariat. Within the decision-making process of each of these, this information is processed along with that of other interest groups and public bodies. Each delegation in turn communicates its decision (output) to the General Assembly Main Committee debating the issue (input). All new viewpoints are digested there, and a resolution is prepared for the General Assembly (output'). This resolution also is information which goes back to the suppliers of the original input (feedback). This reactivates all those who had an interest in the original proceedings. (For the sake of simplicity, feedback in the figure is shown only to the WCC.) A re-evaluation produces a modified ecumenical opinion (output^2), which is communicated as previously. Other private interest groups and public bodies also put in new information. New positions are formed and each delegation communicates its revised opinions to the General Assembly plenary session debating the issue.

This mutual interaction occurred in the two case studies cited in this paper. The WCC has pressed governments to take international action as well as national action with international implications. It has asked and encouraged its constituency members to make representations to their governments. It has worked with and through national delegations to the UN and it has maintained contact with the ECOSOC and the Secretariat through its status as an NGO with consultative status. It does have a place in the international decision-making process and in transnational activity. In the case studies described, it appears that additional independent variables also have had a bearing on the realization of WCC goals: the national interests at stake as perceived by the target, international interests as perceived by IGO officials, the importance of competing NGOs, the extent to which an issue is considered a priori

of religious interest, and the amount of detail with which the advice of the WCC is proffered. All these factors enter into the rapidity of norm-creation and the sustainability of a new norm.

The breadth of the WCC's interests represents a growing Christian consensus on international social justice and welfare among nations. The WCC's immediate preoccupation with helping only the baptized early gave way to concern for the whole community in which Christians live, even as a minority. Its strength lies in not speaking for powerful groups in society, as was the Church's custom in the past, but for the poverty-stricken, the sufferers from discrimination, and those weary of injustice whether they are Christian or not. Its strength lies in guiding with gentle hands forces contributing to welfare among nations.

Fig. 1. *A Communications Model of the WCC in International Decision-making*



NOTES

1. The Economist's (London) criticism is typical; it calls the WCC to task for its ever deeper and...ever more reckless intervention in social and politlcal issues at the expense of its more traditional religious concerns. September 1, 1973, p. 30

2. WCC Constitution, Article V.I. (a)

3. WCC Constitution, Article VI.1.

4. W.A. Visser 't Hooft (ed.), The New Delhi Report, New York: Association Press, 1962, p. 107.

5. For examples, see Darril Hudson, The World Council of Churches in International Affairs, London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1977, pp. 200-1, 202, 204, 263.

6. CCIA, Annual Report, 1957/58, pp. 27-8.

7. The Guardian, 15 March 1974.

8. The complete report of the consultation is found in Pamela H. Gruber, (ed.), Fetters of Injustice: Report of an Ecumenical Consultation on Ecumenical Assistance to Development Projects, 26-31 January, 1970, Montreux, Switzerland. Geneva: WCC, 1974.

9. W.A. Visser 't Hooft (ed.), The First Assembly of the World Council of Churches: The Official Report, pp. 9-11, 51-56, 74-82, 88-100. New York: Harper's, 1949.

10. See for example, the debate at the 1949 Central Committee meeting. WCC, Central Committee, Minutes 1949, pp. 17-19.

11. W.A. Visser 't Hooft (ed.), The Evanston Report, New York: Harper, 1955, pp. 6, 158.

12. As reported in The Sunday Times (London), 18 December 1960.

13. Visser 't Hooft, The New Delhi Report, pp. 93-115.

14. Norman Goodal (ed.) The Uppsala Report 1968, Geneva: WCC, 1968, pp. 29-30. Verbatim reports of the speeches are found in "White Racism of World Community?" in The Ecumenical Review, vol. 20 (October 1968) pp. 371-84.

15. WCC Central Committee, Minutes 1969, pp. 35-40.

16. WCC, Programme to Combat Racism, untitled, 3 September 1970, 4 pp. Mimeographed.

17. Daily Telegraph, 7 September 1971.

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